

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66611
DRAFTED BY: PM/ISO-GTCHURCHILL
APPROVED BY: PM/ISO-GTCHURCHILL
----- 102395

R 172047Z JUL 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO CINCUSNAVEUR

S E C R E T STATE 168737

FOLLOWING REPEAT MANAMA 808 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
KIDA TEHRAN 13 JULY.

QUOTE

S E C R E T MANAMA 0808

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS : MARR, BA
SUBJECT : MIDEASTFOR STATUS

REF : MANAMA 0805

SUMMARY: IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH LEGAL MINISTER AND AMIR,
I HAVE IMPRESSION GOB SINCERE IN ITS DESIRE TO ARRANGE TWO YEAR
LIMIT ON MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE IN MANNER PERMITTING MAXIMUM
FLEXIBILITY TO EXTEND THE LIMIT IF THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT
PERMITS. WHILE I AM NOT SANGUINE GOB CAN AVOID BEING FORCED TO
STICK TO TWO YEAR LIMIT BY POLITICAL PRESSURES, WE SHOULD SEEK
TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY IN THIS ARRANGEMENT SHOULD
ENVIRONMENT FOR MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE
OVER COMING YEAR. ON BASIS THESE DISCUSSIONS, I HAVE BECOME
DOUBTFUL THAT GOB CAN DEVISE A WRITTEN UNILATERAL STATEMENT OF
ITS DESIRE TO IMPOSE A TIME LIMIT WHICH WILL PERMIT IT TO MAINTAIN
THE FLEXIBILITY IT PROFESSES TO DESIRE. HENCE, RECOMMEND THAT
WE TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN MAKING A WRITTEN STATEMENT TO GOB
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WHICH WILL ACKNOWLEDGE ITS DECISION TO ESTABLISH TIME LIMIT
BUT DO SO IN A MANNER PRESERVING OUR FLEXIBILITY TO CONSIDER
THE MATTER FURTHER NEXT YEAR. RECOMMENDED TEXT IN PARA 4.
END SUMMARY.

1. JULY 12 I CALLED ON LEGAL MINISTER BAHARNA, WHO IS TO "DRAFT" GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED NOTIFICATION TO US ABOUT TWO YEAR LIMIT ON NAVY PRESENCE. THE PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO REVIEW MY DISCUSSIONS WITH FONMIN TO MAKE CERTAIN BAHARNA HAD ACCURATE READING OF MY JULY 9 MEETING WITH FONMIN (MANAMA 790), UNDERSTOOD NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY IN ANY WRITTEN POSITION GOB MIGHT TAKE, AND FULLY GRASPS IMPORTANCE OF EXCHANGING DOCUMENTS ON RECENT NEGOTIATIONS PRIOR TO MAKING ANY SORT OF WRITTEN NOTIFICATION RE TIME LIMIT ON NAVY PRESENCE. BAHARNA FULLY UNDERSTANDS THESE POINTS, WILL ADVISE GOB IT MUST EXCHANGE DOCUMENTS BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH ANY KIND OF NOTIFICATION ABOUT FUTURE TIME LIMIT, AND PROMISED GOB WOULD NOT DUMP A LETTER ON US WITHOUT DISCUSSING TEXT IN DRAFT.

2. JULY 13 I MADE COURTESY CALL ON AMIR, BROUGHT UP NAVY QUESTION, AND REPEATED TO HIM INSTRUCTIONS STATE 160780 WHICH I CONVEYED TO FONMIN JULY 9. AMIR EXPRESSED SRGENT NEED TO WRAP UP RECENT NEGOTIATIONS FORMALLY. HE URGED THAT ISSUE OF GOB'S DECISION TO SET A TIME LIMIT ON CONTINUED NAVY PRESENCE BE HANDLED IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD PRESERVE U.S.-BAHRAINI RELATIONS. HE FULLY SUPPORTS CONCEPT OF SEEKING MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY IN WORKING THIS OUT, NOTING THAT IT IS HIS HOPE THAT MID-1977 WOULD BE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE FOR NAVY DEPARTURE AND THAT SITUATION MIGHT EVOLVE IN A MANNER PERMITTING MIDDLE EAST FORCE TO REMAIN LONGER IF USG DESIRES THIS. AMIR EXPRESSED HIS IRRITATION WITH RECENT SAUDI-IRANIAN COMMUNIQUE IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS, SAID HE ALSO HAD CALLED IN IRANIAN AMBASSADOR TO COMPLAIN AND THAT HE HAD ASKED FONMIN TO TAKE IT UP WITH SAUDIS WHILE IN JIDDA.

3. COMMENT: I AM CONVINCED GOB IS SINCERE IN ITS DESIRE TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY RE THE TWO YEAR LIMIT. AT THE SAME TIME, GOB WILL NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE TWO YEAR LIMIT TO ITS PARLIAMENT AND PUBLIC AND TO ITS NEIGHBORS. THEREFORE, UNLESS THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR CONTINUED NAVY PRESENCE CHANGES MARKEDLY FOR THE BETTER IN THE COMING SIX MONTHS OR SO, IT IS PRUDENT FOR US TO ASSUME GOB WILL FEEL
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FORCED TO SEE THE PROPOSED MID-1977 DEPARTURE EFFECTED. WHILE BAHARNA TALKED A BIT ABOUT A VERBAL "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" ON 1977 DEPARTURE WHICH COULD BE DISCUSSED AGAIN NEXT YEAR, I AM BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT THE FONMIN IS FULLY PERSUADED THAT WE ARE GENTLEMEN ON THIS ISSUE. WE TRIED TO IGNORE HIS OCTOBER 1973 NOTE TERMINATING THE AGREEMENT AND I AM CONVINCED FROM SEVERAL REMARKS HE HAS MADE THAT HE IS GOING TO WANT SOMETHING IN WRITING. WHILE I AM PERSUADED GOB SINCERELY SEEKING FUTURE FLEXIBILITY, ON BASIS MY DISCUSSION WITH BAHARNA I THINK WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME GETTING GOB TO PHRASE ANY SORT OF UNILATERAL STATEMENT TO US IN LANGUAGE THAT WILL GIVE US FLEXIBILITY. BAHARNE FOR INSTANCE, AS DOES FONMIN, KEEPS REFERRING TO MID-1977 "DEADLINE". HENCE, ON RECONSIDERATION,

I THINK WE SHOULD, HAVING EXCHANGED DOCUMENTS ON RECENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOB, PERSUADE BAHRAINIS TO UCCEPT U WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM US WHICH WOULD ACKNOWLEDGE WITH AS LITTLE COMMITMENT AS POSSIBLE GOB'S POLICY DECISION TO LIMIT NAVY PRESENCE TO MID-1977. END COMMENT.

4. RECOMMENDATION: THAT I BE INSTRUCTED (A) TO U K GOB TO PROCEED IMMEDIATELY WITH EXCHANGE OF NEGOTIATED DOCUMENTS USING A DATE TO BE DETERMINED BY DEPARTMENT (WOULD JUNE 30, 1975 BE ACCEPTABLE? OR WOULD JULY 1 BE PREFERABLE FOR CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS BEST KNOWN TO THE DEPARTMENT? BELIEVE GOB TOTALLY FLEXIBLE ON THIS) AND (B) TO PROPOSE TO GOB THAT EMBASSY SEND IT A LETTER DATED IN LATTER PART OF JULY, NOT REQUIRING RESPONSE, ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

QTE ON THE BASIS OF DISCUSSIONS OVER THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS, THE USG UNDERSTANDS THE GOB HAS REVIEWED ITS POSITION ON THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF THE U.S. NAVY'S MIDDLE EAST FORCE IN BAHRAIN UNDER CONDITIONS LAID OUT IN THE STATIONING AGREEMENT OF DECEMBER 1971 BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. THE USG UNDERSTANDS THAT, ON THE BASIS OF THE PREVAILING SITUATION, THE GOB HAS MADE J HOLICY DECISION THAT IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL IF THE MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE WERE TERMINATED AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE AND HAS TENTATIVELY SET MID-1977 AS THE PREFERABLE DATE.

IT IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES THAT THE ARRANGEMENT UNDER WHICH MIDDLE EAST FORCE OPERATES FROM BAHRAIN HAS NEVER BEEN CONSIDERED BY EITHER
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GOVERNMENT TO BE A COMMITMENT IN PERPETUITY. HENCE, IN THE STATIONING AGREEMENT EACH GOVERNMENT SPECIFICALLY RECOGNIZES THAT THE ARRANGEMENT MAY BE TERMINATED AT ANY TIME BY EITHER PARTY WITH THE PROVISION THAT A SPECIFIED PERCOD BE GRANTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF TERMINATING THE MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE. IN VIEW OF THIS UNDERSTANDING AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF THIS PRINCIPLE, THE USG IS PREPARED TO ENTER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOB IN 1976 TO DETERMINE WHAT FORMAL STEPS NEED BE TAKEN IN LIGHT OF THE PREVAILING SITUATION AND THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ON THIS QUESTION AT THAT TIME. UNQTE.

5. REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS. TWINAM UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, NAVAL FORCES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE168737
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PM/ISO-GTCHURCHILL
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750248-0706
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507105/baaaapnr.tel
Line Count: 155
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN PM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <24 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: MARR, BA, US
To: CINCUSNAVEUR
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006